



STATE OF NEVADA
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Thursday, March 25, 2010
Nevada Department of Agriculture
405 South 21st Street, Sparks, NV 89431

The Nevada State Conservation Commission held a public meeting on March 25, 2010 at 10:00 am at the Nevada Department of Agriculture, 405 South 21st Street, Sparks, Nevada 89431. A tour of the new facility followed the meeting.

The State Conservation Commission considered and acted on the following items on March 25, 2010.

Board Members Present: Joe Sicking, Paradise/Sonoma CD; Vance Vesco, Big Meadow CD; Chris Freeman, Nevada Tahoe CD; Eric Rieman, Carson Valley CD; Donna Lamm, Southern Nye County CD; Leland Wallace, Esmeralda CD; Joseph Fortier, CD of Southern Nevada; Ed Foster, NV Dept. of Agriculture.

Board Members Absent: Dr. Rangesan Narayanan, UNR College of Agriculture Biotechnology and Natural Resources

Others Present: Jim Lawrence, Acting Administrator, NV Division of Conservation Districts; Kelly McGowan, NV Division of CDs; Sandi Gotta, NV Division of CDs; Brandi Ré, NV Division of CDs; Bruce Peterson, State Conservationist, NRCS; Kerry Benson, Deputy Attorney General, NV Attorney General's Office; Pam Griswold, President, NvACD; Bruno Bowles, Southern Nevada Water Authority; Austin Osborne, Washoe-Storey Conservation District; Tony Lesperance, Director, NV Dept. of Agriculture; Andi Kemmerer, District Manager, Washoe-Storey Conservation District.

I. CALL TO ORDER- Quorum established.

A. Chairman Sicking called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Introductions were made of those present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA - *ACTION*

A. The agenda was approved as written via a motion to approve by Vice-Chairman Vesco, seconded by Commissioner Freeman, motion passed.

III. REVIEW, AMENDMENT AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *ACTION*

A. *Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2009:* A motion to approve the minutes as written by Commissioner Rieman, seconded by Commissioner Lamm, motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Director Tony Lesperance, NV Dept. of Agriculture welcomed the commission to the facility. Mr. Lesperance highlighted some of the features of the facility. The facility is bonded which helped them survive in the current budget cuts. The original estimate to construct the facility was 29 million; they saved 9 million dollars on the project. The department is operating with 2/3 of the employees that they operated with 2 years ago. They have lost fifty percent of their state funding. With the latest cuts, they lost ten percent of their budget, \$500,000 of their reserves and an additional \$150,000, which led to the elimination of the state veterinarian position. When the final budget was approved they ended up losing ten percent and 1.5 million from their reserves. They have a board meeting next week with IFC to refund the state veterinarian position that was lost in the cuts. By law a state veterinarian must be on staff so something is going to have to be done. They currently have three veterinarians on staff.
2. The University of Nevada-Reno main station farm will be closed per the current proposal. The concern is that it puts the land in jeopardy to be sold. The College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources (CABNR) meeting is being held at the facility next Tuesday, March 30 at 11:00 am. Mr. Lesperance will be presenting the importance of agriculture in Nevada. He feels that in the eyes of the UNR Board of Regents that the deal is done to close CABNR. He noted that he is trying to make it very clear that the agriculture community has outreaching benefits. The total gross income of agricultural production between greenhouse industry and food processing industry in Nevada is in excess of 1 billion dollars; indirect impact ratio is at least 1 to 1. It is not hard to come up with a 2.5 billion dollar impact from agriculture. He questioned the understanding the state legislatures' have on the importance of agriculture and will be looking to the Governor in this primary election year for his support. Mr. Lesperance closed by stating that stripping away these programs is putting Nevada's agricultural industry in jeopardy.
3. A discussion led to questions being raised if there is a constitutional issue regarding UNR being a land grant college. Mr. Lesperance said there is an extreme discussion on the legality of how a land grant university can shut down its college of agriculture. There is possibly a legal challenge coming forward from other states and national interests. Most western land grant universities are watching this closely.

V. REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION- Status of Division of Conservation Districts

1. *General – Jim Lawrence –*

- a. Mr. Lawrence reviewed the latest departments' budget instruction, which reduced the budget across the board by ten percent in addition to the original sixteen percent. These reductions were in addition to the original four to ten percent previously taken. Ultimately, DCD did not cut quite ten percent as we were able to work with the Department . The grants to district program which was originally funded at \$5,000 per district, was reduced in the last budget cycle to \$4,200 for FY09/10. During the last special session the grants were reduced by an additional \$200 per district. The districts will receive \$4,000 in FY10-11. Mr. Lawrence was adamant that we couldn't go any deeper in terms of cuts to the grants and were fortunate that the division did not have to take a true ten percent reduction as it would have been much more drastic. DCD did take additional operational cuts in other areas; also we will hold the line and do our best but are simply waiting to see what the next budget instructions will be. A request to IFC for contingency funds was made to make up for the AG liability insurance premiums for the district supervisors that have increased \$11,000 in FY10. We build our budgets nearly three years in advance and unfortunately the projection does not

match the current rates. We are on the agenda for the April IFC meeting.

- b. Jim notified the commission that Allen Biaggi, Director; DCNR is retiring April 30, 2010. Allen has been very supportive to the division. Leo Drozdoff, Administrator with NV Division of Environmental Protection has been appointed to fill his position as Acting Director.
- c. SB3063 was introduced by Senator Reid and has a companion in the house SB4782; to fight invasive species with an appropriation of 80 million over the next 5 years. The bill was uniquely set-up as a loan to be paid back at twenty-five percent and in-kind match.
- d. HR4060 presented by Heller would reinstate the royalty payment on geothermal with a twenty-five percent share cut to rural counties. It is possible another bill will be presented representing wind and solar.

2. *Conservation Districts Meeting Logs – Kelly McGowan & Sandi Gotta*

- a. Kelly noted that DCD has been in contact with the districts to ensure they have their three legal meetings to be considered for good standing. A few districts have not held all their meetings or have held them but not submitted their minutes and agendas with the 30 day time frame including Duck Valley, Lander, Lamoille, NE Elko, Owyhee, and Star Valley. Ruby hasn't held any meetings. We are seeing specifically in Elko County a problem and have attributed this to the resignation of their district employee, Eleanor O'Donnell. The situation may propose an opportunity for those districts to think of consolidating to get back on track and make the paperwork more manageable or possibly hire an employee jointly.
- b. Kelly reviewed the measurement indicators for FY2010. Item 1, the ratio of dollars generated by districts for every state dollar they receive was 17.5 last year and 22.1 this year. In these current budgetary restrictions it is still improving and shows the ability to seek other sources of funding. Item 6, \$200,000 in work programs; the division is projecting optimistically to help districts improve their current financial position by obtaining out of state funding. All of the districts are in good standing. Many other items are being fulfilled. Sandi and Kelly are being very conservative on meeting with districts due to the Governor's restrictions on the divisions travel budget. They will be utilizing teleconferences to maintain communications with the districts. Pam Griswold, NvACD President suggested using video-conferencing equipment to eliminate physical travel. Sandi confirmed that DCNR has video-conferencing capabilities available on the 2nd floor in the Bryan building; however, many of the districts do not have the same resources.

3. *General/Correspondence – Kelly McGowan & Sandi Gotta*

- a. Range Camp will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary and are looking to recruit alumni to attend this year to discuss how Range Camp affected their lives. Districts have funds available in their budgets to sponsor a camper or two. If you have students in your district, Kelly urges them to request support.
- b. Kelly mentioned a new program offered by NRCS with conservation funding of \$400,000 available for organic and transitioning growers. Kelly reviewed key points from the NV Small Farm conference he attended. Much of the conversation was focused on organic and transition growers and the use of high-tunnels. This method of growing can extend the growing season by 60 days. Kelly suggested having one of the speakers from the conference, Vance

Corum attend the State Convention in November to speak to the districts about his 30 year experience working with producers on how to achieve success with open-air markets, market strategy and programs available for funding to agricultural producers. Encouraged the commissioners to attend the conference if they have not in the past.

- c. Sandi provided highlights of her trip to the NACD National Conference in Orlando, Florida.
 1. NACD has a new CEO, Jeff Eisenberg. Jeff's background includes the Nature Conservancy and Public Lands Council. His key priorities are leadership development; including district and supervisor training and to triple the efforts to communicate with members from national to local levels.
 2. At the NASCA breakfast a discussion was had regarding a RC&D marketing campaign. Ms. Freeman will be putting together marketing efforts to spotlight the benefits of the RC&D. The hope is this will eliminate the reoccurring budget cuts to RC&D's.
 3. Dave White, NRCS Chief highlighted his top ideas and goal to lead NRCS. 1) NRCS proposed an 80% office reduction so employees can focus efforts in the field. 2) Good science matters. 3) You can't treat resources in isolation. 4) Local leadership is essential.
 4. Ray Ledgerwood worked with NACD Board members in a strategic planning session. NACD will be sending out the plan and asking for local input via webinar.
 5. Sandi was able to spend a lot of time with Pam, NvACD President and a lot of great discussions were had of projects the commission can do to work with NvACD.
 6. Chris Freeman was also able to attend the NACD meeting. One of the sessions he attended provided information on districts working with art groups to highlight agriculture. They have had great success back east using this art approach.

VI. AGENCY UPDATES

A. Nevada Department of Agriculture – Ed Foster

1. Updated the commission on the current situation with estray horses coming into Double Diamond and Damonte Ranch residential areas.
2. Scott Marsh and Tina Mudd are splitting duties in the weed program. Scott will be handling enforcement and is still the coordinator. Tina has been taking the lead on a weed free forage program.
3. Chris Mason, Chief Chemist has moved on after 27 years of service. He took a job in private industry and relocated to Colorado. The labs are still up and running and the responsibility of the position has fallen to Ed Foster.
4. Tina Mudd has written a grant to pay for five UNR bio majors to work 20 hours per week. They will be working in labs, providing Spanish translation, IT help and producing a plant industry newsletter. Foster noted that covering all of the projects has been a logistics nightmare, but that everyone is multi-tasking and although times are challenging it is rewarding to make it work.

B. UNR College of Agriculture Biotechnology and Natural Resources– Dr. Rangesan Narayanan – No Report

C. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bruce Peterson –

1. A sage grouse initiative is underway. The listing decision came out and was quickly followed by NRCS decision to use program dollars for an initiative to improve habitats and maybe head off a listing in the future. Next week Senator Reid, the Cattlemen and Farm Bureau is sponsoring three meeting in Winnemucca, Elko and Eureka to encourage

producers to look at this situation and possible cost share to improve habitat. They have been contacted by BLM, Forestry and Fish and Wildlife to partner on some positions.

2. Updated the commission of BLM, Forestry and Fish & Wildlife programs available for organic and high tunnels of \$400,000. State currently has 28 certified organic producers, yet NRCS only contracts with 5 at this time. They are working on a pilot program to include 8-10 major growers utilizing high tunnels (hoop houses). Some are major growers of vegetables and other back yard gardens. NRCS is struggling through assisting the small producers and expanding a new customer base.

3. WRP – Wetland Restoration Program. It is a program designed for restoration, improvement and enhancement of wetlands. When he arrived the goal was zero for WRP and an allocation that was returned every year. He sold the program last year to a biologist with Fish & Wildlife and they are going to have some activity in it. He thinks realistically there will be 2000 acres of wetland restoration spanning Washoe to Caliente including a possible easement.

4. FRPP – Q1 (State Question 1) funds are still available as potential match funding through 2010. Initial allocation was 3.5 million for FRPP. Nevada is considered a small state in terms of the farm bill under the regional equity program. Providing regional equity through the Small Farm Bill entitles Nevada to 15 million. We haven't spent that very well here in the past. We had an opportunity to get another 1.5 million and now will spend close to 5 million in FRPP. Staff should be complimented for that.

5. EQIP – Will be 90% obligated by April 1st, which will allow NRCS to apply for another 2 million in EQIP.

6. Mr. Petersen is using every opportunity to convince people to use the farm bill dollars on public land to fund land management agencies and permittees to get their back logged practices complete that have been shelved due to lack of funding. He realizes it will take some time but hopes that will improve.

7. RC&D – Commissioner Freeman was in Washington D.C. making a plea for continued funding for RC&Ds. Mr. Petersen stated he has never been in a state where it is as functional and successful as it is in Nevada. He feels the program will be restored and funded. Commissioner Freeman stated there is a national equivalent to NvACD for RC&D and he was able to go for the training and then lobby for the program. He felt the overall response was positive and that legislation will be introduced to support and fund the program.

8. Bruce made a goal to attend one meeting from every conservation district. He has made it to Lovelock, Jiggs, Eureka and Fallon and hopes to make it to more this year.

9. Dave White, NRCS Chief is a career NRCS person and has a great plan to provide support to the districts. He believes that NRCS is fortunate to have Mr. White in that position.

10. NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative. Three meetings are scheduled with Senator Reid to discuss the initiative.

D. Nevada Association of Conservation Districts – Pam Griswold –

1. Pam said the State meeting will be held late October or early November in either Ely or Mesquite.

2. Pam reported that while attending the NACD national meeting, the Cap & Trade resolution passed.

3. Review of the NACD meeting in Orlando. The top three goals at the national meeting were lobbying at the congressional level for federal conservation programs to provide resources to the districts, develop conservation policy that impact private lands conservation, providing information on the web, and providing training at annual meetings to districts.

4. Ms. Griswold updated the commission on a public service announcement that has been produced by Brent Gerber, an Elko private attorney, called "Smoke Bear". The PSA is to bring awareness to the effects of fire on forests and rangelands. The next is to be

called "Scorched Bunny". Brent is asking for support by requesting people write to their local radio stations and requesting they play the PSA.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review and Approval of all Conservation Districts' Final Financial Reports for FY 2009 as per NAC 548.090 and NAC 548.110 – *ACTION*

1. Staff provided comment on Districts' Final Financial Reports. The Commission reviewed the Final Financial Reports for FY2009 as per NAC 548.090 and NAC 548.110. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve all 28 districts' final financial reports, seconded by Commissioner Fortier, motion passed.

B. Review and approval of all Conservation Districts' Annual Reports for FY2009 per NAC 548.110 – *ACTION*

1. Kelly commented that the division posted on its website the annual reports from the CD of Southern Nevada, Dayton Valley CD, Lahontan CD, Mason Valley CD, Smith Valley CD, Nevada Tahoe CD, Washoe-Storey CD and Southern Nye CD; as these 8 districts provided exceptional annual reports that could easily be used as a template or to provide ideas for other district that may be looking for an improved format.
2. The Commission reviewed the Annual Reports for FY2009 for all conservation districts' as per NAC 548.100. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to accept all 28 districts' annual reports, seconded by Commissioner Rieman, motion passed.
3. The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the reports for good standing consideration for FY2010.

C. Consider support of resolutions approved and submitted by the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts on November 3 and 4, 2009. – *ACTION*

1. Pam Griswold, President, NvACD presented and reviewed the resolutions to the Commission. Resolution 3-2009 drafted by Big Meadow Conservation District, *Livestock Care Standards Board*. Pam suggested the language to be changed from *humane society* to *animal awareness organization*. Pam took the resolution to the national meeting; however it did not pass as it was state specific.
2. Commissioner Vesco moved to support the resolution and have staff draft a letter of support, seconded by Commissioner Freeman, motion passed.
3. Staff will draft a SCC letter of support to NvACD regarding the resolution and follow up with the NvACD president.

D. Review and adoption of the Draft Strategic Plan for the Nevada State Conservation Commission. – *ACTION*

1. The commission reviewed the 5 year Strategic Plan and Commissioner Fortier complimented Sandi Gotta on the fine job she did putting the document together. Commissioner Fortier expressed his concern that the state of Nevada ranks 52/52 in national funding from state to districts. The national survey was done by NACD to chart how state legislatures provide funding to their conservation district programs. The survey included the two territories as well as the 50 states.
2. Commissioner Freeman asked if there is anything that might not be able to be accomplished due to budget restraints. Executive Secretary Lawrence responded that yes there is a possibility that targets may or may not be accomplished and that it is a matter of time before we know for sure if it is budgetary or systematic. Budget instructions have not been given by the state at this time. The division is still waiting for guidelines. Jim would like to have a discussion at each of the meetings and possibly in between meetings to review the targets are to make sure we are working toward the ones that are feasible based on the current support available.
3. Kelly reviewed the memo to districts regarding 'Project Wish List'. The memo requests the districts for their top three project priorities to allow the division to match projects with available funding sources. This will help the districts meet their resource

priorities through possible partnerships with NRCS or any other agency for alternative funding. The 'Project Wish List' was identified on the commission's strategic plan as their #1 priority. To identify need with on the ground projects or programs and match funding as a proactive approach. Staff requested input from the commission to modify the draft version of the form and to get feedback or changes to Kelly or Sandi within two weeks.

4. The Commission reviewed the 5 years Strategic Plan developed at the November 2, 2009. Commissioner Fortier made a motion to adopt the Strategic Plan, motion seconded by Commissioner Freeman, motion passed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of a request to enter into a contribution agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. - *ACTION* Staff / Bruce Petersen, Natural Resources Conservation Service

1. Mr. Lawrence reported collaboration with Bill Elder and Bruce Peterson in providing additional funding to the division through a NRCS partnership. Staff reviewed the agreement details with the commission.

2. Bruce Peterson explained how the funding would be line-itemed on the budget as an out-sourcing contribution agreement with agencies and districts. The division would assist in the distribution of the farm bill. He recognized that staffing at the district level is insufficient. If staff can share the project and program information, this strengthens the districts in Nevada and in turn strengthens NRCS in Nevada. If DCD staff can deliver information at local work group meetings while providing valuable input and developing partnerships. Programs would include farm bill delivery, outreach to agriculture, and funding lists that requires fifty percent match. Division will be a liaison to NRCS and districts while maintaining attendance at regularly scheduled district meetings.

3. Questions presented included if the funds would erode current state funding. Funding would be defined as a task with a deliverable. This opportunity comes at a good time as this is a non-base year.

4. The commission found the proposal favorable. Commissioner Wallace made a motion to support the cooperative agreement with NRCS, seconded by Commission Lamm, motion passed.

The Commission reconvened at 1:25 pm.

B. An overview of the draft proposal for the new requirement to apply for an NPDES permit for pesticide applications. - *ACTION* Charles Moses, Nevada Department of Agriculture A complete copy of the presentation is attached.

1. Mr. Moses presented on the Clean Water Act - permitting of discharges from pesticide applications. Background information was provided regarding the 2001 Talent Irrigation Decision, where the 9th circuit court of appeals ruled that irrigation canals fall under the definition of "Waters of the United States" and herbicide applications must be authorized by CWA permits. Permits to apply pesticides on or near water systems that drain into "Waters of the United States". Regardless of the change in law, Nevada has US waterways defined so it shouldn't include all surface water. State and federal navigable waterway term is also defined. There is no distinction between the two. This information can be accessed on the NDEP webpage.

2. NPDES permits are required for all pesticides that leave a residue in water when applications are made over or near "Waters of the United States". On June 8, 2009 the circuit court granted a two year stay of the decision, until April 9, 2011. Permits are not required until after April 2011. EPA expects to propose its general permit by April 2010 and issue a final permit by December 2010. NDEP is the CWA authorized permitting

authority in the State of Nevada. The NV Dept. of Agriculture will assist in regulating the permits. Citizens have the right to challenge permits if they believe there is an infraction.

3. Who must file? Any federal, state or local government agency. Any entity tasked with managing property (i.e. homeowner's associations) and any commercial business not part of a small business enterprise.

4. Permits: Notice of Intent (NOI). Mosquito and other aquatic nuisance insects, aquatic weeds, area-wide pests (ditch bank and forestry).

5. Treatment thresholds: 160 acres (surface water – mosquitoes), 50 miles (irrigation systems), 10 miles (water of the US), 640 land acres (area wide spray programs).

6. Life of the permit is 5 years, with a \$200 per year fee.

7. The facilitator/applicator must maintain the permit. Not the land owner. If there is any residue or drift a permit is required. There are two permit types: individual or general. Permit holders should use the lowest effective amount of pesticide and perform regular equipment maintenance. Must implement IPM measures and monitor compliance with permit conditions by keeping records and reporting annually.

8. Questions can be directed to Alan Tinney, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection at 775-684-9414 or atinney@ndep.nv.gov or Charles Moses, Nevada Department of Agriculture at 775-353-3716 or cmoses@agri.state.nv.us. More information is available on the NDEP and Department of Agriculture websites.

9. No action was taken.

C. Presentation by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the current status of the greater sage-grouse and what it may mean to Nevada landowners and land managers. Steve Abel, Wildlife Biologist - FWS, Reno Field Office

1. Service just came out with their findings on greater sage grouse. The first petition was filed in 1999. In 2005 listing was "not warranted". In 2007 they were forced to review it and found it was "warranted with limitations". Current listing details for the greater sage grouse is 8 (1 being the top rated), bi-state listing is a 3 and is currently listed as "warranted but precluded".

2. There are three entities that they can look at: species, sub-species and distinct population segment. In Nevada there are two entities that come into play. One is the species, which is greater sage grouse range wide covering a lot of the state, primarily Clark and Storey County and bi-state distinct population segment which occurs in Lyon, Douglas, Carson City, Mineral and Esmeralda counties.

3. The process to list as an endangered species is complex. Bi-state and rangelands and threats are how they are quantified by triage. Twelve month finding; warranted, not warranted, warranted but precluded. While waiting in limbo and in the queue it has no statutory protection. There are currently 250 candidates on the list. It takes 3 to 5 years before funding is received and remains to be state managed and reviewed annually. There are many variables to the listing process which take a number of months to complete.

4. Districts are encouraged to contact NDOW to see how they can get involved and funding available for conservation of habitat on the ground. It is a managing process of how to conserve the species without being too restrictive. There are many partnerships opportunities available to private land owners and various agreements between NRCS and Fish and Wildlife. These "candidate conservation agreements" or "candidate conservation with assurance agreements" can influence listing. It is very similar as a safe harbor for the listed species. It is an assurance for the private individual to encourage the individual to improve habitat but not feel like they will be penalized if the conditions change. They would only be responsible back to the original baseline established. SCC could hold a partnership agreement and have others i.e. CD's sign on.

5. Providing specific population totals is challenging and there isn't an exact calculation that can provide that information down to a specific number. The

population totals are general with roughly a 30% decline with a flattening trend. Some places are going up and other are coming down, there is quite a range in the continuum. The derived population estimate is based on a variable of assumptions. Sagebrush eradication has played a great role in their decline and varies across the range. A suggested population is from tens of millions in the 1800's pre-settlement and in current date as low as 150,000 and upwards to 500,000. A best guess average would be 400,000. Populations are variable within the state and habitat is essential to the species. Invasive species, geothermal development, pipelines, horses, and climate all have considerable impact on greater sage grouse however are challenging to matrix.

D. Discussion on the environmental process used when out-of-basin water transfers are proposed. - *ACTION* Nevada Division of Water Resources / Sicking

1. Nevada Division of Water Resources representative was not available to attend.
2. Commissioner Sicking discussed how an (EIS) environmental impact statement should be required to transfer water out of one basin to another.
3. Bruno Bowels, Southern Nevada Water Authority was present for the discussion. However, without a representative from NDWR, Commissioner Rieman made a motion to table the item until the June meeting, seconded by Commissioner Lamm, motion passed.

E. Consideration to endorse the efforts of the Nevada Department of Agriculture and Bureau of Land Management's efforts to manage wild/feral horse and burro populations within the identified appropriate management level range. - *ACTION* Staff/Vesco

1. Commissioner Vesco presented a press release written by Big Meadow Conservation District to the commission regarding the efforts to manage wild/feral horse and burro populations. The issue was discussed. Ed Foster provided the commission with data to support the need of management. Commissioner Vesco will provide an electronic copy of the letter to department staff. It was agreed to have staff re-write the letter specific to the commission. The letter will be forwarded to Chairman Sicking for signature and will be distributed at the discretion of the commission. A motion to endorse was made by Commissioner Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Lamm, motion passed.

F. Consideration of submitting a letter regarding the proposed closure of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources to the Board of Regents and President Glick. - *ACTION* Vesco / Sicking

1. Commissioner Freeman provided an update regarding the proposed closure of CABNR. Commissioner Freeman is on the advisory board for the school of agriculture. There are four committees working on different aspects of the closure. One on the question of legality of UNR being a land grant college. Eliminating the college would eliminate the representative on the SCC board and would not be in compliance with statute NRS 548.120. This would lose continuity between the university and the commission.
2. The university needs to cut 11 million. Closing the college of agriculture only save 4 million; however, the closure would lose all grants totaling 10.7 million. This is not a cost effective approach. It would include the closure of the slaughter station which turns a profit and the additional loss of 4H, FFA livestock judging programs and the processing of organic meats to northern Nevada and California. It has been discussed that they would close and/or sale the main station ranch property.
3. A letter will be drafted and submitted to the advisory board regarding the commission's concerns by April 5, 2010. The letter will be sent to President Glick, Provost Johnson, and University Board of Regents, Legislatures, Governor and media sources. Commissioner Vesco moved to support and submit the letter, seconded by Commissioner Rieman, motion passed.

IX. COMMISSIONER ITEMS

A. Comments, Report, Items to be included on the next agenda.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Three-minute time limit per person. No public comment.

XI. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING - *ACTION*

- A. Environmental process used when out-of-basin water transfers are proposed.
- B. Meeting to be held at the Division of Conservation Districts at the end of June.
- C. Commission will review the districts budgets and annual work plans.
- D. Update on CABNR.

XII. ADJOURNMENT - *ACTION*

Commissioner Freeman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Lamm, meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.